

DOCKET NO.: FCI-2552/C2757
Applicati n N .: 09/919,321
Office Action Dated: October 14, 2003

PATENT
REPLY FILED UNDER EXPEDITED
PROCEDURE PURSUANT TO
37 CFR § 1.116

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-34 are pending. Claims 1, 10, 25, and 31-33 have been amended, and new claims 35-41 have been added in this reply. Claims 2, 14, and 34 have been canceled. Applicants respectfully submit that the amendment of claims 1, 10, 25, and 31-33, and the addition of claims 35-41 do not raise any new issues for the Examiner, and do not necessitate any further search or consideration. Entry of the above amendments is therefore respectfully requested. Claims 1, 3-13, 15-33, and 35-41 will be pending upon entry of the above amendments.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's reaffirmation in the office action that claims 19-22, 29, and 30 are allowable.

Claims 1, 7, 8, 10-12, 15-18, 23, 24, 27, and 33 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over U.S. patent no. 6,024,584 ("Lemke") in view of U.S. patent no. 4,045,105 ("Lee"). Claims 31 and 32 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Lemke. (The office action summary, and page 2, lines 13-15 of the detailed action do not mention claim 13. For the purposes of this reply, Applicants assume that claim 13 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Lemke based on the comments on page 5, lines 19-22 and page 6, lines 1 and 2 of the detailed action.)

Claims 2-6, 9, 14, 25, 26, 28, and 34 have been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's reaffirmation that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of their respective base claims and any intervening claims.

Claim 1 (the base claim of claim 2) has been amended in this reply to include all of the limitations of claim 2. Claim 10 (the base claim of claim 14) has been amended to

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include all of the limitations of claim 14. Claim 33 (the base claim of claim 34) has been amended to include all of the limitations of claim 34. Applicants therefore respectfully submit that amended claims 1, 10, and 33 are allowable. Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 10, and 33 (and claims 7, 8, 11, 12, 15-18, 23, 24, 27, 31, and 32, which depend from claims 1 or 10) under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is respectfully requested. Withdrawal of the objections to claims 3-6, 9, 25, 26, and 28, which depend from claims 1 or 10, is also respectfully requested.

New claim 35 includes all of the limitations of claim 3 and its base claim (claim 1). New claim 36 includes all of the limitations of claim 4 and is base claim (claim 1). New claim 37 includes all of the limitations of claim 5 and its base claim (claim 1). New claim 38 includes all of the limitations of claim 6 and its base claim (claim 1). New claim 39 includes all of the limitations of claim 25 and its base claim (claim 1). New claim 40 includes all of the limitations of claim 26 and its base claim (claim 1). New claim 41 includes all of the limitations of claim 28 and its base claim (claim 10). Applicants therefore respectfully submit that new claims 35-41 are allowable.

Applicants respectfully request that a timely notice of allowance be issued in this case.

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